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SUBJECT: FOOD SECURITY ASSISTANCE: AN APPEAL FROM THE
FIELD FOR GREATER COORDINATION

¶1. Summary: In order to maximize the development impact of taxpayer-funded foreign assistance, the U.S. Mission in Uganda strives to ensure that all U.S. Government (USG) assistance programs are well coordinated internally, as well as with the Government of Uganda (GOU) and other development partners. In recent weeks, the U.S. Mission learned through the Ugandan press of two programs funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture that will operate in Uganda to support a World Food Program (WFP) school feeding activity in one region of Uganda, and provide micro finance credit support to the Foundation for International Community Assistance (FINCA) throughout the country. These activities may affect the U.S. Mission's ability to implement existing programs, given limited infrastructure to import increased quantities of food from Mombasa port, as well as the fact that the quantities proposed for monetization may take us above our Bellmon ceiling. We will stagger our commodity imports to address these issues, but Post requests that all USG agencies that are planning to implement assistance programs in Uganda consult with the U.S. Mission in advance of program approval. We need to ensure that the totality of USG assistance to Uganda is coordinated among USG agencies, as well as with the GOU. Effective coordination will ensure the success of programs critical to achieving U.S. foreign policy and economic development objectives in Uganda. End summary.

¶2. USG food security programs are critical to our ability to achieve the U.S. Mission's top two policy objectives in Uganda: Regional Peace, Security, and Stability, Recovery and Development in Northern Uganda. The U.S. Mission in Uganda has built strong working relationships with the leadership of Uganda's Ministries of Finance and Agriculture to ensure proper coordination of its food assistance programs.

U.S. Mission Managed Food Security Assistance

¶3. USAID's Food for Peace program (FFP) supports food security in Uganda through contributions to the World Food Program (WFP) and to cooperating sponsors. FFP requires that its donations to WFP are prioritized for direct distribution in areas of acute need. Cooperating sponsors receive both food commodities and monetary support in Multi-Year Assistance Programs (MYAPs). MYAPS specify the amount of commodities which the cooperating sponsors will distribute directly to beneficiaries, and the amount which will be monetized (converted into cash through sales) in the Ugandan market, with proceeds used to support broader development programs which focus on a variety of activities that increase the availability of, access to, and utilization of food by strengthening individual, household and community coping and resiliency capacities. Proceeds also support the strengthening of local governance and civil society institutions to address food insecurity.

¶4. In FY 2008, FFP contributed 47,850 MT of commodities to

WFP in Uganda, valued at \$46.3 million. In FY 2009 to date, FFP has committed approximately \$10 million to WFP's Uganda Appeal, targeted for distribution in areas of acute need in the Karamoja region of northeast Uganda.

¶5. FFP is currently implementing two MYAPS in Uganda. In 2007, FFP committed \$76 million over five years to ACDI/VOCA for programs focused on the northern sub-regions of Acholi, Teso and Lango that support increased food security in the north through farmer training, improved agricultural practices and market linkages. In 2008 USAID/FFP committed \$23 million over five years to Mercy Corps International's Healthy Practices, Strong Communities Program focused in the Kitgum and Pader Districts of northern Uganda. This program seeks to increase food production and sales, improve health and nutrition among children and pregnant/lactating women and provide access to clean water and improved sanitation. FFP contributed \$26.5 million to the two MYAPS in FY 2008.

¶6. In March 2009, USAID/OFDA began implementation of a \$5 million activity that will provide essential humanitarian assistance through food for work, and initial inputs for agriculture, which stimulate and link to economically productive value chains. The activity is being implemented in the Moroto, Nakapiripirit, Abim, Kaabong, and Kotido districts of the Karamoja region.

GOU Launches Emergency Appeal for Karamoja

¶7. In February 2009, WFP, under the coordination of Uganda's Office of the Prime Minister launched an appeal to provide \$69.3 million for WFP's unfunded Emergency Operations (EMOP) to address emergency needs in Karamoja. At the end of 2008, the Karamoja sub region began facing a severe humanitarian crisis, following three consecutive years of drought. Since then, the humanitarian situation has deteriorated significantly as Karamoja moves into the traditional hunger season and with the next harvest not due until October 2009. More than one million people, approximately 85% of the population of the Karamoja sub region, are estimated to be food insecure and in need of immediate food and nutrition assistance.

¶8. FFP funding for FY09 has diminished and requests for additional contributions for Uganda will be weighed against worldwide demands. It is unclear at this point whether FFP will provide any funding to WFP beyond the \$10 million already committed for FY 2009. It is, therefore, important that with limited resources, all USG agencies strategically coordinate their contributions to accommodate the priority needs in Uganda. Emergency needs as well as longer-term development needs should be carefully analyzed and considered.

Surprise! New U.S. Food Security Interventions in Uganda

¶9. Over the past several weeks, the U.S. Mission to Uganda has learned through word of mouth and the local press of additional USG-funded food assistance programs to be implemented in Uganda. The Uganda press reported that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program awarded \$19 million in commodities assistance to WFP to support school feeding and maternal and child nutrition projects in Karamoja. These funds will support WFP's long-term Country Program, which addresses development rather than emergency needs.

¶10. We have also learned that USDA will provide 15,000 MT of hard red winter wheat (valued at approximately \$5 million) for monetization to the Foundation for International Community Assistance (FINCA international). The proceeds will be used to expand FINCA's national

microfinance program in several districts in Uganda, but not in the deprived Karamoja region. Post has learned that the USDA/FINCA commodities are expected in-country for monetization in September and October of 2009. This will coincide with planned FFP-funded monetization of the same commodity, and this could result in a glut of commodities, reduced prices and lower revenues.

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An Appeal for Greater USG Coordination
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¶11. USG-donated commodities to Uganda are limited by the Bellmon Amendment to ensure that local markets are not adversely affected by food aid contributions provided by the USG. Post urges all USG agencies to coordinate their plans and share information regarding planned commodity contributions with the U.S. Mission to Uganda in advance to ensure that USG commodity contributions in aggregate are in compliance with Bellmon.

¶12. More broadly, the U.S. Mission to Uganda requests that all USG agencies planning to implement assistance programs in Uganda coordinate with us in advance, before entering into agreements with the GOU and/or cooperating organizations. This will allow the U.S. Mission to ensure that USG and GOU priorities are being effectively addressed, that the 'package' of USG assistance programs is well coordinated with the GOU, and that ultimately USG assistance achieves its intended U.S. taxpayer-funded purpose: achieving U.S. policy goals by advancing peace, stability, and economic development in East Africa.

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